

or a DNA binding fragment thereof and a double strand oligonucleotide comprising the sequence 5' WXYCAGACZ 3' or a functional equivalent thereof wherein in said nucleotide sequence, W represents A or G, X represents G or T, Y represents C, A, G or T and Z represents A or C.

2. (Amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the double strand oligonucleotide comprises the sequence 5' WXYCAGACZ 3' or a functional equivalent thereof wherein in said oligonucleotide sequence W represents A or G, X represents G or T, Y represents C, A or G and Z represents A or C.

3. (Amended) The method according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the double strand oligonucleotide comprises the sequence 5' AG(C/A)CAGACA 3', or a functional equivalent thereof.

4. (Amended) The method according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the double strand oligonucleotide comprises the sequence 5' ATGCAGACA 3' or 5' GGCCAGACA 3', or a functional equivalent thereof.

6. (2x Amended) A kit for screening agents that modulate transcriptional activity or binding of at least one Smad protein selected from the group consisting of: Smad2 spliced in exon 3, Smad3, and Smad 4 with a DNA element selected from the group consisting of: a TGF β -inducible DNA element and an activin-inducible DNA element, said kit comprising:

- D²
- said at least one Smad protein;
 - TGF β or activin; and
 - a double strand DNA molecule comprising the sequence 5' WXYCAGACZ 3' or a functional equivalent thereof, wherein in said nucleotide sequence, W represents A or G, X represents G or T, Y represents C, A, G or T and Z represents A or C.